

Mulberry Bush School Special Education Needs (SEN) Information Report

Who we help

We help primary aged children who have been unable to live in a family or learn in school, who have deep and complex emotional troubles and have developed antisocial ways of being. We aim to support them to discover helpful ways of living with themselves and others, and to see themselves as learners and achievers

Our arrangements for working with parents and carers and involving them in their child's education and care

We know that for the children to make the most progress at the Mulberry Bush, families need to engage in a process of thinking through the issues they face together and finding new ways of managing some of these. We have a strong multidisciplinary Therapies and Networks team that works with the families, and provides consultation to staff and therapy for children. We talk with the family from their first visit about the issues they face and develop an understanding of what the work will be for them in support of long term change for them all as a family.

We run regular residential family weekends. These involve working with invited families for two or three days at the school individually and in groups. We hope that these have felt supportive to those families who have attended and introduced them to different ways of thinking about the struggles they have faced.

We have also worked more intensively in sessions on a one to one basis with the family or individual family members. This work can then be continued through the placement of their child. Our aim is to work together to create a home base which can support and enable the child to return to their community and a local school.

Our arrangements for assessing and reviewing children's progress towards outcomes.

The child's placement is reviewed by the School at least twice a year at Internal Case Conference meetings (ICCs) and Treatment Team meetings (TTs) as well as at other meetings involving relevant School staff. Information from these internal meetings is shared at Annual Education Reviews (AER) and Looked After Children (LAC) Reviews via the school's Integrated Treatment Plan. If it is felt desirable or necessary, other network meetings will take place between reviews.

We very much hope that School staff, who work closely with the child, will be involved in the discussions and decision-making about a child's future or about the child's interests within the family. The School very much wishes to contribute to the planning for prospective foster placements and to be involved in the introductions and transitions to such a placement.

It is also expected that the Head Teacher, Household Manager and Therapies and Networks Team members will be closely involved in issues concerning the timing and type of future education and care planned for a child about to leave the School. Plans for a child's visit to a prospective new school should be made with the Head Teacher who, if appropriate, will arrange for a member of staff to accompany the child on such a visit. Some children spend a day a week in their prospective new school during their last term at the Mulberry Bush School.

It is our experience that children make more progress when they experience all those involved in their care working in strong co-operation. We recognise the importance of all areas of learning - social, emotional and academic. We have a comprehensive Integrated Treatment Plan (ITP) that through our Internal Case Conferencing system ensures that all departments are working to maximize the use of any learning opportunities.

This use of the ITP also helps the child experience consistency from the adults and in the environment within the school. The ITP includes records that show the child's progress. We hope that this enables families to better understand the progress the child is making and so provide their child with any support they can.

In the classroom the children have the curriculum tailored to meet their individual needs. Regular tracking meetings ensure that any child making less than expected progress is noted and interventions are planned. A learning journal is maintained for all children that can be used to evidence progress. This is reviewed more formally through each child's Individual Academic Targets which also links directly into our regular Internal Case Conferencing system (ICC).

How we plan our curriculum

Due to the needs of the children placed at the school our curriculum places a particular focus on building core academic skills and promoting personal, social, health and emotional development. Foundation subjects play a key role in broadening children's overall experience and knowledge of the world. Extension opportunities offer alternative approaches to build on classroom learning experience.

<u>Core academic skills</u>	<u>Foundation subjects</u>	<u>Extension opportunities</u>
English Maths Science ICT	Music Geography History Art Design Technology PE RE	You've Got Skills Forest School Mainstream school visits

Personal, Social, Health and Emotional Growth

The Mulberry Bush School Emotional and Social Skills Curriculum
 School Council
 Choosing afternoons
 Group Work
 Sex and Relationships courses
 eSafety
 Drugs and alcohol awareness sessions
 You've Got Skills
 Secondary experiences
 Mainstream experience

Our Special Needs Co-ordinator has responsibility to oversee the following areas of work:

1. That learning barriers are identified as soon as possible. We employ Educational Psychologists who assess all identified children and is available to look at ongoing areas of concern. We also employ a Speech and Language Therapist and an Occupational Therapist to assess identified children early in their stay and then to advise staff on strategies to help children in identified areas. These specialists also provide intensive 1:1 work with children where necessary.
2. To provide individual and small group programmes to meet individual needs. Once a problem area has been identified the teacher plans work to help the child to address this.
3. To provide support for teaching teams in planning for individuals. The Special Needs Co-ordinator is able to use her experience and knowledge to assist the teaching teams in their planning or for putting them in contact with others who could help.
4. To use external professionals and agencies to work with children and support staff in their work. We have developed a range of links with local agencies that are available to support our work. These include our local GP practice, Hearing Impairment Service, Speech and Language Unit, and a specialist teacher for dyslexic children.

The expertise and training of staff

Since 2008 all of our teachers, teaching assistants and residential care staff have completed our Foundation Degree in therapeutic work with children and young people, which is accredited by the University of the West of England. We also run regular training events for our staff based on the needs of our current child group.

Support for improving emotional and social development

Ensuring our pupils are emotionally and physically healthy, safe and supported is central to the schools ethos. Modelling the support of our staff is central to enabling them to provide this for the pupils. All staff are highly trained and enabled to share similar ways of understanding the pupils' needs. The staff are involved in regular case conferences, consultations and treatment meetings. Therapists are part of treatment teams and provide consultancy to the task. Pupils are actively encouraged to become involved in understanding their own needs and working with staff to have these needs met. The Therapies and Networks Team, as well as providing consultation, guidance and support to teams, provide individual psychotherapy and group drama and music therapy to those children whom we identify as having a need for, and the capacity to make use of, this element of our service.

We have good links with the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHs) service and regularly have consultation phone calls with their lead psychiatrist.

Arrangements for handling complaints

We don't always get it right and we hope that when this happens we are very open to talking things through to find ways of resolving the issue. If matters are not resolved to your satisfaction we would encourage you to complain to our complaints officer John Turberville (jturberville@mulberrybush.org.uk). It is always helpful if the complaint is put in writing and as well as knowing the content of the complaint it is always helpful if you indicate the

outcome that you feel will resolve the issue. There is a clear complaints procedure for the children and forms are available from any staff member. We will ensure that any complaint is dealt with promptly. If the complaints officer is unable to resolve the matter, the complainant can contact the Chair of Trustees via his secretary Rosie Campbell (rcampbell@mulberrybush.org.uk) Children are able to contact an independent advocate at VOICE by phone from their households if they wish (08088 005792).

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